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Testimony in Support of HB-6355

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein and Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am from Salisbury, Ct. and am a supporter of CT Against Gun Violence. I am a co-founder of the Northwest Corner Committee for Gun Violence Prevention, a group of 150 members, which we started immediately after the Sandy Hook tragedy. Keeping guns out of the hands of those who are mentally unstable is common sense and should be non-negotiable. As we all remember, the gunman at Sandy Hook, Adam Lanza, was not mentally fit and should never have been allowed access to guns. My family vividly recalls the horrifying murder of a vibrant and brilliant junior at Wesleyan University who was shot and killed at point blank range, by a mentally ill young man named Stephen Morgan, who had been stalking her and who had access to guns. He had been planning a mass shooting on campus, but was thwarted. He also should not have been able to possess guns, especially since there were warning signs that he was dangerous. He pleaded "Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity" and is currently serving a 60 year term at Connecticut's maximum-security psychiatric hospital.

It is time to strengthen the Extreme Risk Protection Law so that it works harder to prevent gun violence. In particular, when the protection order expires, it should be a requirement that the subject is no longer at risk of violence before the firearms are returned. That is not the case now.

I ask that you favorably report HB-6355 out of committee so that the General Assembly can vote to strengthen our Extreme Risk Protection law so that it works harder to prevent firearm suicide and homicide. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sophia deBoer
Salisbury, Ct,